

JOB CREATION & RETENTION

RC&D projects enhance the economic viability of their communities. The approximately 4,500 RC&D natural resource and community development projects completed annually help create, expand, and financially assist 6,000–7,000 businesses and create and retain 11,000–12,000 jobs every year.

Partnerships

RC&D councils are comprised of local leaders, and the RC&D program is administered by NRCS. In addition to NRCS, RC&D councils partner with other Federal and State agencies and non-governmental organizations to achieve community goals. The partnering USDA agencies include:

- Agricultural Marketing Service
- Agricultural Research Service
- National Institute of Food and Agriculture (formerly Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service)
- Economic Research Service
- Farm Service Agency
- Food and Nutrition Service
- Forest Service
- Rural Development

For More Information

To volunteer for projects with your local RC&D council, submit ideas of your own, or find an RC&D council near you, visit

www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/rcd or

www.rcdnet.org,

or contact your local USDA Service Center.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

RC&D

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Helping People Help the Land

Partnerships Serving America's Communities

RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) program helps communities plan and carry out projects that increase natural resources conservation, support economic development, and enhance the local environment and standard of living. The RC&D program is administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Citizens know what is best for their communities. Non-profit RC&D councils—comprised of local leaders—identify community needs and work with USDA to plan and realize projects. They serve more than 85 percent of the Nation's counties and about 80 percent of its population.

RC&D Elements

RC&D councils concentrate on two or more of the following four elements:

Community Development

RC&D councils help create jobs and sponsor training and skills development programs. Councils also work to develop natural resource-based industries such as alternative energy enterprises and agritourism. Some RC&D projects improve or acquire needed community amenities, such as recreation facilities, rural housing, sewage treatment plants, water systems, and roads.

Land Management

RC&D environmental projects improve natural resources for agricultural and other uses such as tourism, fish and wildlife habitat, energy conservation and production, and environmental education. Projects also may promote and preserve agricultural land and historic and scenic sites.

Land Conservation

RC&D councils conserve the land through projects that improve soil quality, reduce soil erosion, keep sediment out of water supplies, and help us adapt to climate change.

Water Management

Many RC&D council projects protect water resources by promoting wise water use, controlling flooding, and improving the quality of local water supplies.

RC&D Priorities

Each year, RC&D councils help U.S. communities complete several thousand projects and begin many more. Here are six priority areas that implement RC&D elements.



RC&D Councils develop partnerships with local citizens, agricultural producers, Indian Tribes, and State and Federal agencies to improve and enhance social, economic, and environmental conditions in their communities. RC&D projects create new markets and opportunities while addressing important resource concerns.



RC&D councils partner with government agencies and non-profit and private organizations to help U.S. landowners solve natural resource issues and position land managers as leaders who address conservation and climate change and enhance water resources for the future.



By facilitating partnerships between U.S. farmers and communities, RC&D councils are expanding local markets to deliver fresh, nutritious food to America's children and providing more people with convenient access to safe, healthy food.



RC&D councils work with local communities and landowners to reduce energy consumption and develop and expand economic opportunities provided by our Nation's natural resources. The number of related RC&D projects increases each year to meet America's growing need for renewable energy.



Based on natural resource science, the RC&D program enables communities to develop strategies to conserve land and develop water resources while empowering sustainable agriculture production, which contributes to local economies.